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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 NICOSIA 000434

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SUBJECT: TALAT ANGRY AT TWO ESSENTIAL PLAYERS -- THE UN AND
THE UK

Classified By: Ambassador Ronald L. Schlicher for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

1.(C) Summary: In a June 6 meeting with Ambassador Schlicher, Turkish Cypriot (T/C) leader Mehmet Ali Talat accused the UN of "appeasing" Greek Cypriots in its choice of language in the June UNFICYP report attendant to the mandate rollover. Ignoring the many positive aspects of the report, Talat argued that replacing concrete mention of "Turkish Cypriot isolation" (in the December 2007 report) with language noting "the sense of isolation felt by Turkish Cypriots" was unacceptable. A result of the perceived slight, the Turkish Cypriot leader had decided he would not meet with UN Political Undersecretary Lynn Pascoe in a meeting planned for mid-June in Cyprus; Ambassador at several points urged Talat to reconsider the issue of the Pascoe visits; all of us interested in the Cyprob need to maintain UNHQ,s positive interest, and Talat,s views of the report language would be more effective if delivered personally. Talat asked for the United States to help ensure that the pending draft UNSC resolution on Cyprus was balanced and included language concerning "two constituent states" that had appeared in the May 23 joint statement by the two leaders. In a separate but related matter, Talat also accused the UK of appeasing the Greek Cypriots for the June 5 MOU signed with the Republic of Cyprus (RoC) that also omitted language from the May 23 leaders, statement regarding two constituent states. Minimizing Ambassador,s observations that the leaders, March 21 and May 23 agreements were the true measure of strategic movement, Talat complained that all T/C gains achieved since 2004 were being "eroded," and he was being punished for his cooperation with the international community, which exposed him to domestic critics (and no doubt skeptics in Ankara). On a more positive note, Talat said he would meet with Christofias in the near future to discern his intentions, adding that Christofias understood better than the UN the issue of isolation. The Ambassador urged Talat not to let the present atmospherics blind him to his greater strategic vision of a negotiated settlement. End Summary.

2.(C) A demoralized Talat told the Ambassador that he could not "understand" why all the gains the T/Cs had achieved with the international community since 2004 had slowly been "eroded" despite the fact that he had done his best to cooperate. As proof positive, he pointed angrily to paragraph 45 of the June 2 UNSG report, where "sense of isolation" had replaced "isolation" in the previous December 2007 version. He sighed that this wording could "not be rectified" and did not reflect the fact that the T/Cs were living under isolation, which the UNSG had agreed to lift in his May 2004 report. He said that he had lost confidence in the "enthusiasm" and "impartiality" of the UN, which he claimed had sought to appease Christofias. Consequently, he would not

meet with Deputy UNSG Lynne Pascoe--whom he blamed for the isolation wording--during Pascoe's planned trip to Cyprus in mid-June.

13. (C) Talat also complained about the absence of language from the May 23 joint statement from the leaders on "two constituent states" in the draft UNSC resolution on Cyprus. He said that the draft resolution lacked "balance" and that only the G/C desired language from the May 23 statement on a "bizonal, bicomunal" federation had been included. He called on the United States to use its influence so that all the relevant language from the May 23 leaders' statement in paragraph 2 was included.

14. (C) The Ambassador urged Talat to meet with Pascoe to the keep UN management focused on the present negotiation process and as well as to relate face-to-face to Pascoe his criticisms of the UNSG report. He said that the T/Cs should not capitulate to their frustrations, but rather work within the system to effect the changes they sought. He should not let the present negative atmospherics blind him from his strategic vision of a negotiated settlement on the island, toward which he and Christofias had made real progress. Talat made no comment whether he would reconsider his decision not to meet with Pascoe, but added that he looked forward to meeting with Christofias in the near future to "discern" his intentions. He added that Christofias understood the issue of isolation better than the UN. The Ambassador complimented him for his plan to reach out to Christofias and said that such meetings between the leaders could only help, as March 21 and May 23 clearly demonstrated.

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Also Angry with the UK

15. (C) Talat, again ignoring the positive aspect of the issue, complained angrily about the June 5 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the UK and the RoC, which--like the draft UNSC resolution--omitted language from the May 23 leaders' joint statement on two constituent states. The MOU also added wording on a single sovereignty, international personality, and a single citizenship, all absent from the May 23 document. Talat complained that such topics were still to be negotiated. He said that the UK "had no business" in dealing with this and that it had repaired its relations with the UK--which had been badly frayed by a similar UK-Turkish MOU last fall--at the expense of the T/Cs. He did not mind that the UK sought to help Christofias--even he wanted to support the G/C leader--but the T/Cs should not pay as a result. He hinted that he may not be able to accept and invitation to the UK to visit PM Brown, adding that "where would we meet, in a coffee shop or a restaurant?"

16. (C) The Ambassador urged Talat not to exclude the UK from the process, which cannot be done in any case. Instead, as the G/Cs had done after the UK-Turkey MOU, Talat should use the opportunity of the MOU to try to influence the UK as the process goes forward. Talat should not accept defeat before coming battle had even been entered. Talat, however, sighed that the British would give him nothing.

17. (C) COMMENT: In a mirror-image replay of G/C angst over the December 2007 report noting T/C "isolation," Talat was clearly depressed over what he perceived as final proof in the June 2 UNSG report's "sense of isolation" wording that the international community--or least a large part of it--had "switched sides" and now favored the Greek Cypriots. He clearly viewed this as a watershed defeat for the T/Cs that, as he complained, could not be fixed. On a more positive note, while his suspicions of Christofias clearly increased over the MOU with the UK, he made quite clear to us that he would continue with the process and seek a meeting with Christofias; he even felt that the G/C leader would understand him better than the UN. Our biggest concern is

that the double whammy of the MOU and UNSG report, and possible overblown reactions there to, could weaken Talat,s position with "deep staters" and naysayers in Turkey. We have recommended to EUR and IO an approach whereas we work with the UK to advocate the idea inserting the May 23 language into the pending resolution; if the UNSC can buy this without turning what should be a routine rollover exercise into a major problem, this would help assuage Talat,s concern while putting the local focus back on the shared success of the May 23 Leaders, agreement. End Comment.
SCHLICHER